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# California Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Los Angeles Region

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Gray Davis  
Governor

**TO:** Interested Parties

**FROM:** Samuel Unger (Original Signed By)  
Unit Chief, TMDL Unit 2

**DATE:** August 30, 2002

**SUBJECT: CALLEGUAS CREEK NITROGEN COMPOUNDS AND RELATED EFFECTS TMDL  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND TRANSMITTAL OF TENTATIVE BASIN PLAN AMENDMENT AND STAFF REPORT**

On October 24, 2002, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) will consider a proposed amendment to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region* (Basin Plan) to incorporate a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to reduce nitrogen compound loading to Calleguas Creek. A public hearing is scheduled for Thursday, October 24, 2002 at 9:00 A.M., in the Board Room of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, 700 N. Alameda Street, Los Angeles, California. At the public hearing, the public will have opportunity to comment on the proposed TMDL.

A copy of the Tentative Basin Plan Amendment and Staff Report for the Calleguas Creek Nitrogen Compounds and Related Effects TMDL is posted on the Regional Board's web page. The web address is <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4/html/meetings/tmdl/tmdl.html>. Please contact Thanhloan Nguyen at 213-576-6690 or Sam Unger at 213-576-6784 with questions or to request additional copies of the staff report and related materials.

Oral presentations should be summarized in writing to the extent possible. Time limitations on presentations may be imposed. In order to review and to assess comments, the Regional Board staff must receive written comments no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 7, 2002. Comments should be submitted to:

California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Los Angeles Region  
320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Angeles California, 90013

ATTN: Thanhloan Nguyen

### California Environmental Protection Agency

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\*\*\*For a list of simple ways to reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see the tips at: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/news/echallenge.html>\*\*\*



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### Background

The proposed amendment would incorporate into the Basin Plan a TMDL to reduce nitrogen compounds loading to Calleguas Creek. As background, Regional Board staff considered studies of conditions related to nitrogen loading to Calleguas Creek. In consideration of elevated ammonia and oxidized nitrogen compound levels, toxicity and eutrophic effects in Calleguas Creek, US EPA listed Calleguas Creek on its 1998 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies in California.

The Regional Board's goal in considering the above-mentioned TMDL is to reduce nitrogen loadings in Calleguas Creek so that the Creek can continue to be used to fully support beneficial uses associated with aquatic habitat and groundwater recharge among others. Elevated levels of ammonia are known to cause toxicity to aquatic organisms and elevated levels of oxidized nitrogen are known to cause eutrophic effects in freshwater systems.

The Regional Board is charged with implementing the provisions of both the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California law) and the federal Clean Water Act in the Los Angeles Region. Section 303(d)(A)(1) of the Federal Clean Water Act requires the Regional Board to identify water quality limited segments within the Region (i.e., those water bodies not attaining water quality standards), and establish TMDLs for the pollutants causing the impairments. A TMDL specifies the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards, and allocates the acceptable pollutant load to point, non-point and natural sources. The TMDL can be expressed in terms of either mass per time, toxicity, concentration, or other appropriate measures.

Analysis of the extensive nitrogen compound monitoring data collected from POTW effluent and within Calleguas Creek has shown that ammonia and oxidized nitrogen concentrations exceed water quality objectives for these compounds. The Regional Board staff has prepared this TMDL to address the documented nitrogen water quality impairments in Calleguas Creek.

The TMDL establishes a phased plan for reducing the loading of nitrogen compounds to the Calleguas Creek from both point and non-point sources. It also sets forth special studies, including one to consider a site-specific objective for ammonia in Calleguas Creek, one to assess eutrophic effects in Mugu Lagoon, and one to develop nitrate objectives to support beneficial uses related to aquatic habitat. The TMDL focuses on reducing the sources of nitrogen compounds from POTW effluent and from discharges related to agricultural activities.

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